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## RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/54/588/Add.2)*]

### 54/219. International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction: successor arrangements

*The General Assembly*,

*Recalling* its resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989, 49/22 A of 2 December 1994, 49/22 B of 20 December 1994 and 53/185 of 15 December 1998, and taking note of Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 on the successor arrangements for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction,

*Recalling also* the results of the programme forum on the International Decade, held at Geneva from 5 to 9 July 1999, and the Geneva mandate on disaster reduction adopted by the forum, together with the strategy document entitled "A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction",

*Recalling further* the forward-looking platform for international concerted disaster reduction as developed by the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction and as expressed in the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,[1]

*Reiterating* that natural disasters damage the social and economic infrastructure of all countries, although the long-term consequences of natural disasters are especially severe for developing countries and hamper their sustainable development,

[1] A/CONF.172/9, resolution 1, annex I.

*Recognizing* the need for the international community to demonstrate the firm political determination required to utilize scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and environmental hazards, taking into account the particular needs of developing countries,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63,[2]

*Noting* the Declaration on Technical Cooperation for the Prevention and Relief of Natural Disasters, adopted by the Rio Group at its thirteenth summit meeting, held in Mexico on 28 and 29 May 1999, as well as the results of the first summit meeting of Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, held at Rio de Janeiro on 28 and 29 June 1999,[3]

*Taking into account* the consideration of natural disasters contained in the report of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held at Vienna from 19 to 30 July 1999,[4]

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the reports of the Secretary-General concerning the activities of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction[5] and on the recommendations on institutional arrangements for disaster reduction activities of the United Nations system after the conclusion of the Decade;[6]

2. *Expresses deep concern* at the increasing number and scale of natural disasters, which have resulted in massive losses of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies worldwide, in particular in developing countries;

3. *Endorses* the proposals put forward in the report of the Secretary-General[6] to ensure the swift establishment of future arrangements for disaster reduction as well as functional continuity for the effective implementation of the international strategy for disaster reduction;

4. *Also endorses* the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish an inter-agency task force and inter-agency secretariat for disaster reduction, under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, in a flexible manner, for the initial period of the biennium 2000-2001, and to undertake a review of these arrangements after the first year of operations with a view to submitting proposals on adjustments;[7]

5. *Decides* to maintain the observance of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction on the second Wednesday of October;

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[2] A/54/497.

[3] A/54/448.

[4] A/CONF.184/6.

[5] A/54/132-E/1999/80 and Add.1.

[6] A/54/136-E/1999/89.

[7] See A/54/497, paras. 11–14.

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish, from voluntary contributions, a trust fund for disaster reduction to enable the funding of the inter-agency secretariat for disaster reduction and to transfer all assets of the Trust Fund for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction to the new trust fund for disaster reduction, effective 1 January 2000;

7. *Calls upon* Governments to continue to cooperate and coordinate their efforts with the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and other partners, as appropriate, to implement and to develop further a comprehensive strategy to maximize international cooperation in the field of natural disasters, based upon an effective division of labour, from prevention to early warning, response, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction, including through capacity-building at all levels, and the development and strengthening of global and regional approaches that take into account regional, subregional, national and local circumstances and needs, as well as the need to strengthen coordination of national emergency response agencies in natural disasters;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to solicit the required inputs from Governments, the relevant organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations in order to optimize further and disseminate listings of organizations of the United Nations system as well as non-governmental organizations that provide civil protection and emergency response at all levels, with updated inventories of available resources, to help during natural disasters;

9. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to optimize further and disseminate through all available channels, including handbooks, the information necessary to guide the international community at large in the effective management of international cooperation in the fields of disaster prevention, early warning, response, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction;

10. *Emphasizes* the urgent need to develop further and make use of the existing scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters, bearing in mind the particular needs of developing countries, and, in this regard, calls upon all countries to strengthen scientific research and training of experts in universities and specialized institutions and to promote the exchange of information;

11. *Recognizes* the importance of early warning as an essential element in the culture of prevention, and encourages renewed efforts at all levels to contribute to natural hazard monitoring and impact prediction, the development and transfer of technology, capacity-building for disaster preparedness, the detection of natural hazards and the issuance and communication of early warnings, as well as education and professional training, public information and awareness-raising activities, such as the International Conference on Early-Warning Systems for the Reduction of Natural Disasters, held at Potsdam, Germany, from 7 to 11 September 1998, to ensure adequate action warnings;

12. *Reaffirms* the need for strengthening an international framework for the improvement of early warning systems and disaster preparedness by developing an effective international mechanism for early warning, including the transfer of technology related to early warning to developing countries, under the auspices of the United Nations, as an integral part of future strategies and frameworks or any arrangements for natural disaster reduction;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the international strategy for disaster reduction, under the agenda item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

*87th plenary meeting*
*22 December 1999*